

**Surma Valley Branch
INDIAN TEA ASSOCIATION**

ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ending 31st December, 1946.

Including a list of Tea Estates, Members
of the Association and Branch
Committees corrected to
30th June, 1947.

Printed at the Cachar Press, Silchar.

Indian Tea Association.

Surma Valley Branch.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held at Silchar, on Wednesday, the 19th February, 1947.

PRESENT :

Mr. C. W. Morley, M. L. A. (Chairman)

Mr. D. R. Livingstone, (Vice-Chairman)

Mr. J. C. Lees	Mr. J. H. Heaney
" J. B. Moir	" L. McHardy
" S. Pyock	" R. M. Vipar
" J. M. Storie	" B. Gupta
" J. Kennewell	" W. G. Grinley
" R. M. McQueen	" J. S. R. Telfer
" J. D. Rutherford	" G. Anderson
" W. N. Drysdale	" L. F. Rae
" A. C. Dutt	" J. W. McKay
" J. F. Baillie	" J. E. Donaldson
" W. E. Legge	" A. M. Smith
" F. D. Stead	" D. R. Smith
" H. G. Webb	" R. Macdonald
" T. Edmond	" G. Ferrier
" R. B. Thom	" A. L. Glanley
" J. Purves	" D. A. Fullerton
" J. L. Boyack	" J. H. Pearson
" J. Armour	" K. Smith
" A. Grieve	" J. M. McB'Laing
" H. T. Dominy	" R. Sengupta

Mr. S. K. Sen
„ A. B. Fricker
„ S. Hague
„ J. D. Gardiner
„ C. A. Longhurst
„ J. Duncan
„ R. L. Adie
„ J. H. Gordon
„ C. B. E. Hinchcliffe
„ J. O. Stoneman
„ Jas. Watson
„ J. Sinclair
„ C. R. W. Ashfield
„ A. M. Shaw
„ T. R. Watson
„ C. W. Mountain
„ S. C. Day
„ J. Stevenson
„ G. R. Hughes
„ H. W. Anderson
„ N. Mackenzie
„ G. W. Boyack
„ H. Webster
„ G. C. K. Merry
„ F. M. Ashwin
„ W. T. Sturrock
„ B. Chowdhuri
„ E. G. McGown

Mr. P. W. Cowie
„ A. A. Ker
„ C. M. Hayes
„ A. Taylor
„ E. W. Bishop
„ S. A. Pearson
„ W. P. Archibald
„ A. G. Wright
„ W. F. Mackie
„ N. H. N. MacLeod
„ W. J. Douglas
„ I. D. P. Stephens
„ M. W. Kay
„ J. P. Ireland
„ D. E. M. Saubolle
„ G. M. Wellburn
„ H. N. Fordyce
„ H. Patterson
„ J. F. Baillie
„ H. K. Choudhury, B. A.
„ S. K. Deb
„ A. D. Hutt
„ D. M. Fyfe
„ A. M. Smith
„ E. A. Cramphorn
„ H. W. Carrothers
„ S. S. Lamacly
„ J. Dudgeon

Mr. D. B. H. Moore, (Secretary)

The following gentlemen attended the meeting by invitation of the Committee :—

- G. A. Raintey, Esq, Chairman Indian Tea Association, Calcutta.
J. S. Hardman, Esq, O.B.E. I.C.S. (Retd), Political Secretary, Planting &
Commerce Group, Assam Legislatures.
K. C. Datta, Esq, Asstt. Labour Commissioner, Govt. of Assam,
Shillong
C. J. Harrison, Esq, Chief Scientific Officer, Tocklai Experimental
Station, Assam.
L. D. Panke, Esq, Distric Traffic Superintendent, B. A. Rly, Dacca.
V. A. D. Howard, Esq, Joint Agent, I. G. N. & R. S. N. Co.,
Fenchuganj.
C. B. C. Paine, Esq., I. C. S., Deputy Commissioner, Cachar.
J. Dumbreck, Esq., I. C. S., Additional Deputy Commissioner, Sylhet.
L. T. Carmichael, Messrs. Duncan Brothers & Co, Calcutta.
A. Dutt Choudhuri, Esq, Superintendent of Textile, Cachar, Silchar.
M. C. Chowdhuri, Esq, Superintendent of supply, Silchar, Cachar.
S. H. Hazarika, Esq, Superintendent of Excise, Cachar.
Dr. G. D. Madhok, Monacherra P. O, Cachar.
„ I. C. Sarwal, Kalline T. E., Kalain P. O. Cachar.
„ H. Domanowicz, Borojalinga T. E., Cachar.
Maulvi Suiyid Maqsood, B. A., Deputy Director of Supply, Sylhet
„ Mukabbir Ali Mazumdar, B. L., Chairman Silchar Local Board.
Dr. G. Fraser, M. D., Labac Central Hospital, Cachar.
Rev. B. Jones, Mission House, Silchar.
S. M. Dev, Esq, Chairman, Silchar Municipal Board
R. B. Vaghaiwalla, Esq, I. C. S. Sub-Divisional Officer, South Sylhet.
S. M. Dutt, Esq, I. P., Superintendent of Police, Cachar.

Letters or telegrams were received from the following gentlemen regretting their inability to attend :—

- S. K. Datta, Esq., I. C. S., Secretary, Supply Dept, Govt of Assam.
Cr. C. G. Terrell, E. D. M. B. CH. B. (Edin) D. T. M. (Liverpool) O. B. E.
M. L. A.

F. J. Heathcote, Esq., Messrs. James Finlay & Co., Calcutta.
Dr. W. B. Anderson, Chundeechera, T. E. Sylhet.
W. H. Miles, Esq., Commissioner for India, Indian Tea Market
Expansion Board.
Dr. K. R. Unger, Rasidpur, T. E. Sylhet.
R. C. Datta, Esq., D. F. O. Cachar,
Dr. N. N. Ghose, Langla P. O., Sylhet.
P. B. Purkayastha, Esq., B. Sc. (Egn), A. M. I. Mech. E., Chief Inspector
of Boilers, Assam.
Sir R. L. McLennan, KT, C. I. E., Chairman, Assam Branch I. T. A.
G. C. Goswami, Esq., B. Eng (Sheff), A. M. I. Mech. E. Chief Inspector
of Factories, Assam.
A. N. Kidwai, Esq. I. C. S., Director of Supply (Proc), Assam.
Dr. B. Chatterjee Dullabcherra P. O. Sylhet.
P. J. Griffiths, Esq., C. I. E. I. C. S. (Retd), M. L. A. (Central)
U. C. Roy, Esq., Subdivisional Officer, Hailakandi, Cachar.
H. F. Clark, Esq., C. I. E. Labour Adviser, Shillong.
Dr. W. N. Stirling, Kalighat P. O., Sylhet.
G. S. Gunning, Esq., O.B.E. I.C.S., Commissioner of Divisions, Gauhati.
Senior Inspector, Office of the Coal Controller for Assam, Margherita.
Dr. C. S. P. Hamilton, Kapaapahar, T. E. Sylhet.
N. M. Macgregor, Esq. Manager, B. O. C. Chittagong.
J. A. Oliver, Esq. President, Chittagong Chamber of Commerce,
Chittagong.

Mr. C. W. Morley, the Chairman addressed the meeting as follows :—

Gentlemen, it is a very great pleasure for me to offer you all a warm welcome to this meeting, and I must thank those amongst our guests who have come from long distances and with a good deal of inconvenience in order to be present today.

In particular, we are glad to see the Chairman of our parent Association, Calcutta, who was at one time a planter himself and has flown from Calcutta on purpose to be with us. In these days we feel that personal contacts between the Branches and the Parent to be a

matter of importance,* we are glad to have with us too, Mr. Harrison whom we know well, and Mr. Dutta, Assistant Labour Commissioner of Assam.

Mr. Payne the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar, attends his first meeting with us, and I do hope that it will not be the last. The rapid change in Deputy Commissioners in Cachar and Sylhet during the past year has been a matter for some concern, with regard to continuity of policy in many matters, but our welcome to Mr. Payne is no less hearty in spite of this.

We also take this opportunity of extending our sincere congratulations to Sir Robert McLennan, Chairman of Assam Valley I. T. A., Mr. A. Whittaker previous Political Secretary, Major Knott, Commandant, Surma Valley Light Horse, and Mr Carpenter of Toklai on the recent Honours bestowed upon them in recognition of their good work in connection with the Industry.

I come now to a review of the Branch's activities during the year. One new member joined during the period, bringing the total membership to 178 representing of 134,640 acres under tea. Some 6 tea estates changed hands during the year but all of these so far remained members of this Association. These transactions are becoming more numerous and the question of Planters whose careers are broken in such circumstances should receive, we think sympathetic consideration from those concerned.

The Ministry of Food contract remained in operation during the year, and the allowance for the increased cost of production was fixed at 6 d. per lb. for plains gardens and 7 d. per lb. for Darjeeling gardens. In this connection you will since have learnt that India has fixed an export duty of annas 7/2/- per lb., in addition to the present excise duty also of annas 7/2/- per lb. In theory these extra costs are to be passed on to the consumer, how far the price to the consumer can be raised without a falling off in consumption or the introduction of a synthetic tea (Ersatz) at a cheaper price, I do not pretend to know. If it should be produced and consumed in anything like the quantity of Ersatz gin during the war, the outlook would be a trifle dim.

On the other hand the opening auction of Black tea covered with export quota and permitted in January for the first time since the war, produced some remarkable prices. Prices for the year were good and there is little doubt that owing to the position in the Dutch East Indies, there is a prosperous time ahead.

Closely allied with the prosperity of the Industry is the position of labour. During the past year we have seen some very rapid changes. There was a very unsettled period from April to September and the Industry's action in regularising the issue of rice concurrently with an interim rise in pay was a timely gesture and welcomed by the labourer. It is significant that agitation has been continuing, but there has been no strike of any importance since the introduction and implementing of this scheme. There is to be a further increase of annas 1/2/- per day Dearness Allowance from the 15th of February, together with other increases in maternity and sick allowances,—as the outcome of a Tripartite Conference comprising of Government, Labour and Industry, which took place recently at New Delhi. That the Tea Industry is fully alive to the trend of events as regards labour is indicated by the recent creation of a Labour Department under the able leadership of Mr. H. F. Clark, C. I. E. at one time Secretary of this Branch.

There is one very important point on which we do not seem to get moving, and that is the question of counter-propaganda specifically against communist activities.

The question of a Newspaper for the Industry has been raised but turned down in Calcutta, on grounds considered to be sufficient.

This being so, we do consider that it should be the duty of the Labour Department to produce pamphlets at once which can be distributed or broadcast by loud speakers, and at the same time an efficient organisation for counter-propaganda should be built up.

Our information is that the Communist party is most active and we consider that counter-measures should be put into effect at the earliest possible opportunity. I would again emphasise that time is very short.

Legislation affecting labour has been active during the period. The Factories Amendment Act came into force from the 1st August, reducing the normal working hours of factory workers from 60 to 50 hours per week and certain provisions for overtime following this was the Factories (holiday) Rules to regulate the granting of compensatory holidays in lieu of the one day per week provided in the Act of 1934. The Payment of Wages Act is to be extended to cover all tea garden workers.

The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act 1945 received the close attention of a sub-Committee appointed by the Branch, and in conjunction with a note from the Planting & Commerce Group, the Branch finalised their recommendations and forwarded these to Calcutta. I understand they are receiving further attention from the Labour Adviser, who will correlate the recommendations from the various Branches and after legal advice will circulate a set of standing orders suitable for the Industry.

Your Committee also expressed their views regarding the minimum wages Bill, which subsequently became a matter of correspondence between the Calcutta, I T A, and the Government. The Rege report has been published and has received the consideration of the Calcutta Association. One result of this report has been the setting up of a "Plantation Labour Advisory Committee" by the Assam Government in which the two Branch Chairmen and the Labour Adviser are the Industry's representatives. The terms of reference of this Committee are to recommend to Government such measures either legislative or administrative, as may be considered necessary to improve the conditions of labour on Tea Estate. The Committee consists of 4 representatives of Government, 3 members of the European Tea Industry, 1 representing the Indian Tea Planters' Group, 2 labour members in the Assembly, 2 labour welfare workers and 2 members from the opposition. The Committee sat on the 9th and 10th of December, but the decision of the Central Government to summon a Tripartite Conference in January at New Delhi to consider problems affecting plantation labourers in tea gardens, cut the ground from under the feet of this Committee. At the same time it was a useful

conference and by the time it was finished, there feeling noticeable from the labour Representatives.

Under consideration is the compulsory primary education Bill. The shortage of qualified teachers is a bar to the large scale application of this Act but in its final form it may have far reaching effects on the Tea Industry. It is a fact, however, that schools provided by the Industry, are at present languishing for lack of pupils. Housing conditions are another point in conjunction with labour conditions as a whole, which are receiving very serious consideration by the Industry and some recommendations in this respect may be expected shortly. The re-organisation of our Medical Practices is under urgent consideration, as are also the improved terms for the Clerical and Medical staffs of tea gardens.

All these increases will cost the Industry a good deal of money and the prospects of low yielding gardens in the region of 5 to 6 mds. per acre are problematical, it is possible that mechanisation in the field may afford them some relief, but, in the meantime I strongly recommend serious consideration of their case by the Calcutta I. T. A.

There is another side to this question of increased wages and that is the provision of consumer goods such as small electric torches, umbrellas, cheap ornaments and jewellery, cooking utensils and such like for the labourers to purchase. In Assam alone there are over a million workers in the Industry waiting avidly for all these and other goods and your Committee have recommended consideration of a scheme for a co-operative society or alternatively a Tea Gardens canteen system similar to the N. A. A. F. I. for the whole of the Tea Districts in India by the Industry. On the one hand it would stop competitive buying and on the other bring back some of this money to the Industry on a profit sharing basis. It is proposed at some future date to abolish concession rice and foodstuffs and commute their value into cash yet, so long as rationing continues the planter will have to continue as a grocer. As I see it there would be no reason why if the scheme be properly conceived, that it should not ultimately take over the provision and distribution of both rice and foodstuffs and thus relieve the planter of an onerous and distasteful duty.

I turn now to the floods which occurred in July last year. There was a sudden rise in the river Borak during the first part of July and Silchar town was more than half inundated and low-lying crops were lost. It was only with great difficulty that the rice stocks in low-lying areas were saved. Government approached the Branch for help in relief operations. This was provided ungrudgingly by tea estates giving shelter to the flood stricken population and cattle ; foodstuffs and medical relief were given to adjoining villagers, some times at a great sacrifice to the garden concerned, in addition, villagers were allowed to collect building materials from garden jungle for the replacement of their homes. Sylhet gardens were not directly affected by the flood but after this, the export of rice and paddy from Cachar was banned and Sylhet, already a deficit district, became faced with a crisis. Government, however, came to the rescue by supplying rice from the Assam Valley which in its turn was temporarily suspended owing to the Nowgong flood and blockage of the hill section. About 1,200 acres of tea were submerged for 2 weeks in Cachar.

Immediately after this came the Postal strike in which the postal services already dislocated by the flood, ceased to function as a public service. A courier service was started by the Branch office and several gardens individually and in this way contact was maintained with Calcutta. Perhaps one of the lessons to be learnt from these calamities is that radio inter-communication is essential at all headquarter stations. The introduction of an Airmail-cum-passenger service is a necessity and we should offer all assistance to any respectable Company who would inaugurate such a service. Whilst on this subject I may add that the Branch has made repeated representations to Government for the extension of telephone facilities to tea gardens, but the Government rates appear to be prohibitive and we have, therefore, asked for public call boxes at selected Post Offices, and Government, I am glad to say, are now beginning to move in the matter. I consider the Branch should continue to press for telephones. Times are changing even from day to day and the telephone is an essential part of civilized life. I look forward to the time when a compromise may be effected between Government and the Industry and every garden may have its own telephone.

Let us turn now to the Branch Rice Purchase Scheme during the period. Early in the year Government promulgated a food grain control order, prohibiting the purchase of rice by one licensee from another licensee. This proved a serious handicap to Circle Grain Purchasing Officers as well to garden Managers. The Branch made strong representation to Government as a result of which the Branch office and Circle Grain Purchasing Officers were exempted from the operations of this order. Sylhet being a deficit district, relied mainly on Branch supplies from Cachar until the July flood, as a result of which export from Cachar to Sylhet was prohibited ; incidentally Cachar was also declared a deficit district and our exemption was also withdrawn.

The Branch approached the Government pointing out the seriousness of the position and supplies from the Assam Valley began to come in. Out of a total indent of 102,600 mds on Government, we received 48,594 mds. Government supplies though helpful at this critical time were inadequate and irregular ; as a result gardens applied to the Branch for supplies which in its turn had to ask for emergency permits, and in every case these were forthcoming and the prompt manner in which Government sanction was granted was greatly appreciated. The Branch supplied in this manner a further 33,860 mds. of rice and 17,632 mds. of paddy. For 1947 we have submitted a rice purchase scheme to Government, the details of which have been circulated to all of you, and I am glad to say that with minor modifications it has been accepted and sanctioned by Government.

Another constant source of anxiety has been the supply position owing to the inadequate and irregular despatches from the Government Agents Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co., who I hasten to add have sent us all they could and as quickly as they could. We have made repeated representations, have sent deputations to conferences, all with little result so far. The difficulties are inter provincial in the matter of the release of surplus produce. The fact remains that the labourer has to be fed. The shortage of Dals and Mustard Oil is most acute, that these commodities are available in the black market, but not through authorised channels, is an enigma, baffling solution.

Here I must mention the loss of food-stuffs in transit ; this vexed

question has been the subject of strong representation to the Indian Tea Association, Calcutta, to Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co., to the Railway and Steamer companies and to the Government of Assam. Any consignment marked I.T.A. is apparently legitimate prey in transit for pilferage and loss, and our claims were either being shelved or turned down on technical grounds, in other words the carrying Companies appeared to be shirking their responsibilities, although well aware of the pilfering that was being carried on daily. As regards the Steamer Company the position has improved, but as regards the Railway there is no improvement and the inordinate delay in obtaining even an acknowledgment regarding a claim continues. A Claims Officer has been appointed by the I. T. A. Calcutta on representations from this Branch, and we hope some redress will be forthcoming.

I will continue now with the question of Cloth. The meagre supplies forthcoming are not adequate for tea garden requirements, the system of allocation on a yardage basis is faulty, the less essential varieties such as shirting, coating, mul-mul etc. always preponderate over the essential types of Dhooties and Saries, and supplies have also been irregular. We have represented to Government that from the very nature of their work the excessive wear and tear on a Sari is a marked feature amongst plucking women, who are out in all types of weather. This representation has not received sufficient attention from Government. On the whole, the position is most unsatisfactory and the system of distribution calls for reorganisation.

As regards Blankets, indents for these were submitted in ample time but they have not been forthcoming, Circles clamouring for supplies are now contemplating cancellation of orders, reminders elicit the information that despatches are moving from Bombay, but as far as we are concerned they do not reach anywhere of interest to us.

Supplies of Cement were again restricted due to the fact of sudden strike of workers in the Assam Bengal Cement Company.

Petrol Rationing has been greatly alleviated during the year but some Circle transport vehicles are at times being hampered owing to supplies being insufficient for their requirements. Unfortunately

Kerosene quotas although slightly increased are still far from adequate and labourers are still in difficulties over this commodity. There has been some talk of de-control of this oil, and it is to be hoped that in the near future all restrictions will be removed.

During the year depredations by wild elephants in the Chutla Bheel, Hailakandi, Chargola and Longai Circles caused serious damage to labourers' crops and were a great hindrance to the expansion of the "grow more food campaign." The damage done and the panic created amongst villagers was of such a magnitude that drastic measures of extermination were considered to be essential, and as a result of strong pressure from the Branch, the Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Stracey visited the affected areas and admitted the position had been under estimated. He has outlined a scheme for drastic extermination and extensive kheda operations with mela sikar and attractive rewards for shooting. In addition the Group in Shillong at the instigation of Mr. Hardman are to table a Bill in the coming session to provide for adequate compensation for elephant damage and suitable control of the herds.

As regards passenger traffic on the Railway, I am glad to note that the old route to Calcutta via Chandpur and Goalundo has been resumed, and I think there has been some improvement in coaching conditions although more cleanliness would be desirable. Coaches are still very delapidated and worn, and it is perhaps pertinent to ask at this stage when we may expect replacements.

Our relations with the Steamer Company have been on the whole satisfactory and cordial, the hardy annual of the demurrage charges has largely been redressed by their generous gesture in increasing the free storage period—a most welcome move. On the question of pilferage, I regret to say they must be indicted, and we would ask them to take further steps to reduce this menace.

During the last part of 1946, the Sylhet Tuberculosis Scheme was introduced by the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet. The proposal was to establish a fully equipped central hospital at Sylhet with a maximum of 100 beds, and on the financial side a target figure of 5 lacs. The Tea Industry in Sylhet was approached for financial assistance and the

subject was referred to the Branch Committee. It was finally agreed to recommend the scheme for support to Calcutta. Ultimately London and Calcutta approved support on condition that the Indian Tea Association should be adequately represented on the governing body, and a subscription of annas -/8/-per acre was sanctioned. Unfortunately the scheme now appears to be held up owing to the change in Deputy Commissioners at Sylhet. It was the opinion of your Committee that this scheme should be extended to Cachar.

The subscription to the Tea Planters' Benevolent Fund have been gradually falling off : in 1945 it was Rs. 1,016/- in 1946 Rs. 847/- I do appeal to you, Gentlemen, to give of your best for this Fund. It is hardly necessary for me to remind you of the hardships of those dependent on this institution for their very existence, and the gratefulness of the beneficiaries.

I turn now to the question of Coal supplies and Fuel Oil. As you have been advised Coal will be practically unobtainable during the coming year, and we have been asked to make the most of wood fuel collections. Your Secretary is in correspondence with the Assam Coal Controller and the Colliery at Dilli to ascertain if supplies of Assam Coal are feasible by rail from Borhot. The restriction on fuel oil has been waived after 5 years. The Burmah Oil Co. and the Assam Fuel Oil Advisory Committee were most helpful and showed us every consideration during those difficult years.

As regards the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board we had hoped to have Mr. Miles with us, the Commissioner for India, to speak to you on this subject. Unfortunately he has been prevented from attending. I should, however like to say that there is a good deal of indiscriminate buying of tea by local dealers and good tea is not available locally. It is possible that in licencing the dealers some control over the quality of tea sold might be obtained.

In the Scientific Department, we note with regret the retirement of Mr. Carpenter after many years of service as Director at Tocklai. He is succeeded by Mr. Harrison whom we know well and we wish him every success. We welcome also the return of Mr. Winter as Scientific Officer for the Surma Valley.

The Secretaryship as a part time office of this Branch, was as you know, held by Mr. J. R. Wilson upto December this year who was most hard working and efficient. He has now proceeded on leave, and on his return will become Branch Secretary to the Assam Valley. We congratulate Mr. Moore on his appointment as our permanent Secretary and he has already demonstrated his keenness and knowledge. I am sure, you will appreciate him. Your Committee have recognised the need for permanent office and Bungalow accommodation by passing a resolution sanctioning these new buildings. The high cost and shortage of materials is a delaying factor at the moment, but as soon as the situation clears, steps will be taken to implement this resolution.

As you will have seen from the Balance Sheet, the financial position of the Branch continues to be satisfactory. It will be necessary however for the present rate of subscription to be increased to £3/- per acre to cover certain increased commitments incurred during 1947.

This increased subscription has received the approval of your General Committee and formal resolution to confirm this will be put up at the conclusion of this Meeting.

Before I close I should like to refer to the improved terms for European Staff in this Valley, whilst there is sincere appreciation for what has been done there appears to be some wide discrepancy in terms and the young man has on the whole benefitted largely. The main pre-occupation of the middle aged Planter is reasonable security for his loved ones and himself on retirement either in the way of a pension or a lump sum down, and I enter an earnest appeal that this matter may have further consideration from your friends in London and Calcutta.

I have referred briefly to the most important events in the year under review. I now take this opportunity and privilege to thank all those who assisted the Industry generally, and this Branch in particular. Our sincere appreciation is due to our Vice-Chair man, General Committee and Circle Committees and all Circle Officers, whose duties have been most onerous during the past year. All unobtrusively have given of their best, and ungrudgingly to assist the Industry in these difficult times.

This is the first time I have had the honour to address you as your Chairman, and I thank you all most gratefully for the co-operation and forbearance you have shown me during the past year.

Mr. G. A. Rainey, Chairman, Indian Tea Association, Calcutta, then addressed the meeting in the following terms :—

MR. CHAIRMAN, GENTLEMEN,

I should like to begin first by apologising for my tardy arrival and secondly by saying how pleased I am that I have been able to get away for a short time from Calcutta and meet you all here today. My visit is quite literally a flying one, and when I mention a few of the many problems confronting us in Calcutta at the present time—labour legislation, the marketing of tea during the coming season and our policy for the future, the organisation of the machinery for the Calcutta auctions, and the immediate and long term warehousing of tea in Calcutta, to mention only one or two—I am sure you will realise why my visit must be so brief. I trust that you will forgive me if my speech is brief, too.

I have listened with great interest to the very comprehensive speech which your Chairman has just made, and before going any further I should like to pay a tribute to the services which he and your Vice-Chairman have rendered, not only to you in the Surma Valley, but also to the Association in Calcutta, during the past year. Our Association have been kept in the closest touch throughout this period.

Despite the fact that the war ended more than a year ago, most of the problems which it brought about are still with us, and many new problems, some of even greater complexity, have arisen, and I would like to repeat here what I said in Jalpaiguri, Assam and the Dooars. Believe me, it is only by the greatest measure of co-operation between gardens in the same circle, between circles in the same Association, and finally between the various Branch and District Associations, and the parent Association in Calcutta that we can ever hope to overcome the

difficulties that lie ahead. Of one thing I am sure. In the past year this co-operation has been greater than ever before, and I and my Committee in Calcutta very fully appreciate the help which we have received from our Upcountry friends, both Indian and European.

Many of the problems which are exercising our minds in Calcutta at the moment arise, of course, from scarcity of essential supplies, and it has been, for example, extremely trying for you planters to have to fight a constant battle in an endeavour to obtain sufficient cloth and foodstuffs for your labour. I don't intend to give you a detailed account of what the I. T. A. in Calcutta have been doing to obtain supplies for you, but I remember that years ago, when I was a planter myself, and when any difficulty arose, we used to wonder what the I. T. A. in Calcutta was doing about it and sometimes felt that it wasn't doing enough. When I spoke at the Annual General Meeting of the Assam Branch a few weeks ago, I therefore tried to give some idea of the background of our work in Calcutta, and feel it would not be out of place if I gave you a very brief idea about it now. The I. T. A. is not, as is sometimes thought by planters, a huge commercial organisation, with a vast staff that can be turned on to any new job that crops up. Neither is it a body of soulless automatons. It consists, as your Branch Committee here, of a few individuals, mostly over-worked, who nevertheless give all the time they can spare to advancing the interests of Tea, not only from the Producers point of view, but from every angle of the Industry. It has a small, but 'able' secretarial staff, an Adviser and, recently, a Labour Adviser. The work, which increased enormously during the war, has this year grown greater than ever and clearly, with its exiguous staff, the Association *cannot* be an administrative body, but must, in fact, remain what it was always intended to be, an advisory and policy-making organisation, whose primary duties are to frame policy, to represent your interests to the Governments concerned, and to advise you on major issues. Nevertheless, when a Branch or a Circle, comes along with a very reasonable demand that the I. T. A. should see that the labour get sufficient umbrellas or cloth, some member of the Committee *does* undertake the job in his spare time, and, though it is not always realised in the Tea Districts, the Association has undertaken a considerable amount of administrative work in organising the distribution of iron and steel, the allotting of coal supplies to gardens, and generally

representing the industry's requirements of essential commodities to the appropriate authorities, the last believe me, being *very* fatiguing business. For example, if you have read the *minutes* of our proceedings, you will know that we have throughout the year been pressing the Government of India for adequate supplies of imported tea chests, and of fertilizers, not only by means of letters, but also by personal representations. More recently, we have also taken up the question of Assam's allotment of such imported foodstuffs as dhal and mustard oil, and have tried to persuade the Government of India to grant a supplementary ration of cloth to tea garden labour, on the same scale as is given to colliery labour. From information which Mr. Griffiths has given me, I fear that our representations on this subject are unlikely to be successful, but we shall continue our endeavours during this period of frustration, until we are satisfied that the legitimate demands of the industry cannot possibly be met. Coal is another subject which has been causing the Committee in Calcutta the gravest anxiety during recent months, and we have recently set up a special Sub-Committee, under the hard-working Chairmanship of Mr. Wallace of Messrs. Duncan Brothers & Co. Ltd. to deal with it. Despite the fact that last year the industry received more than 95% of its original demands for Bengal and Bihar Coal, stocks on gardens at the end of the year, as you well know, were dangerously low, because our requisition proved, in many cases, to have been based on underestimates of requirements. This year, therefore, we put in a demand for 120,000 tons, which is approximately 20% more than we asked for last year, and to build up stocks in time for the manufacturing season, we asked that deliveries should be at the rate of 20,000 tons a month for the first three months of the year. At one time it looked as if we should not get much more than *half* this amount, but urgent representations were made, and, for January, at any rate, the cut was restored. Unfortunately, however, where coal is concerned, allotments and deliveries are two very different things. The shortage of wagons, and the pressing claims of other consumers, have seriously curtailed deliveries, and we are going to have an uphill battle to obtain our supplies. To economise transport, the Coal Commissioner has for some time been urging us to accept Assam coal for gardens in this Valley, which of course will entail alterations to the stoves of your firing machines. We shall shortly be issuing recommendations and advice on this subject, and, in view of the

almost insuperable difficulties of arranging for transport from Bengal and Bihar to Surma Valley, I would urge you all most strongly to take immediate steps to adapt your stoves for Assam coal, so that the change-over may be made by about May or June. Thus you will be assured of more regular supplies than you would have if your coal had to come all the way from Bengal or Bihar.

I turn now to the question of labour, which is undoubtedly the most important of all the problems facing us today. Many of us remember the time when it was comparatively easy for any good manager to keep his labour contented and happy. Those days have now gone. The war has given rise to new standards of living for labour, and new conceptions of the responsibilities of an employer, and the rights of his employees. These new forces, working amongst an illiterate labour force, are bound from time to time, to produce stresses and strains, and I am convinced that only the exercise of imaginative sympathy on our part, and determined effort to anticipate grievances before they arise, will enable us to pass through the next few years in comparative tranquility. It is greatly to your credit gentlemen, that, despite the disruptive influences of the past year, and the acute shortage of many of the workers' essential requirements, the tea industry in your Valley has been comparatively free from serious labour trouble. I would here like to pay a tribute to the Indian garden staff for their loyalty and to that good fellow the tea garden coolie, (and his wife,) whose work in this Province throughout the past 5 hazardous years has been an outstanding example to labour all over India.

To help you in dealing with labour problems, the Committee in Calcutta have established a Labour Department of the Association in Shillong, in charge of Mr H. F. Clark, and this department has now been in operation for more than four months. Mr. Clark's sterling qualities are so well known in this Valley that I need not dwell upon them here. I would like to say, however that we too in Calcutta have the fullest confidence in him, and as Chairman that I personally am finding his advice of the greatest value during these very difficult days. I now I can rely on your giving him all your support and encouragement. As you know we are also appointing Labour Officers to act in an advisory capacity to the various Branch and District Association and

suitable candidates have already been selected for the Assam Valley, the Dooars and Darjeeling, and I am confident that it will not be long before a suitable man is found for the post in this Valley. Before I leave the subject of labour matters, I should like to make a brief reference to the tripartite conference which I attended in New Delhi early last month. This was a milestone in the history of the Industry, and a most important occasion. You have already received various recommendations which the Association has made as result of the conference, and I don't wish to enter into any details here. What I *should* like to do, is to give you an impression of the general atmosphere of the meeting, because these conferences are now to be an annual affair, and must obviously have a great influence on the Industry's future. We found ourselves confronted with a strong labour bloc, consisting of the Labour Department of the Government of India, the Labour Ministers of the Provincial Governments, their Labour Commissioners, and representatives selected *perforce* by the Central Government—of labour itself. Although we could not agree to fall in with many of the Central Government's far reaching proposals for which we came in for a great deal of criticism I should like to place on record the fact that Government showed their desire to co-operate with the industry, and that the reasonable and friendly attitude displayed by all parties at the conference was largely due to the broadminded manner in which the Chairman, the Hon'ble Shri Jaggivan Ram, conducted the proceedings. Another feature of the conference which contributed very largely to its success, was the whole-hearted co-operation between the various representatives of employers. Mr Griffiths and I received the fullest support from the representatives of the Assam Bengal Indian Tea Planters' Association and the Indian Tea Planters' Association, Jalpaiguri. I am sure you will agree with me when I say that this mutual co-operation and consultation between all the various Planters' Associations is now more essential than ever before and I am determined to see that it is strengthened in the future.

I have recently heard that here is a feeling among you that the periods of maternity benefit and sickness allowance recommended as a result of the tripartite conference, are too short, and that you consider that smaller daily payments over longer periods would be preferable.

Government at the conference were insistent on the rates of benefit which we agreed to and it was for this reason that we asked that the period of benefit should be reduced from twelve weeks to eight in the case of maternity benefit, and from three weeks to two in that of sickness allowance. I should emphasise, however, that these recommendations are in both cases minima. We have also seen in Calcutta a copy of your circular recommending a waiting period of three days before the sickness benefit is effective. We did consider this point before putting out our recommendations, but decided not to specify a waiting period in our circular, because we realised that gardens already had various waiting periods for the benefits which they previously gave. As a result of your circular, however, we reconsidered the question at our meeting last week and have now decided to issue a supplementary recommendation on the same lines as your own.

I cannot emphasise too strongly the importance of giving effect to all the recommendations arising from the conference, wholeheartedly, on every estate throughout the whole of North East India. As I have already said, Government showed their desire to co-operate with the industry, and they left it to employers to fulfil the undertakings given by their representatives. Should it subsequently be found that the recommendations made by the Association, as a result of the conference, have been evaded in any way by any garden, the industry would be guilty of a breach of trust, and the confidence which Government have placed in it might well be forfeited. I am sure, gentlemen, that this will not occur, but if it did it is obvious that the employers' representatives at the next conference, would be placed in an impossible and embarrassing situation.

As you know, we made it clear to Government during the conference that we were not prepared to consider any revision in basic wages until a scientific examination into the cost of living on tea estates had been completed and we sought the co-operation of Government in the enquiry which we had recently embarked upon. The Government of India felt that our enquiry would take too long to complete, and they offered themselves to carry out a rapid random sample survey of the cost of living so that the required statistical information might be obtained

more quickly. We welcomed this offer, because it meant that the results of the enquiry would be generally acceptable to Government, and we promised that every facility and assistance would be given to the investigators in their task. As you have heard from Mr. Clark the survey is being carried out immediately by a party of ten investigators with two supervisors and a research officer, and I confidently look to those managers whose gardens are visited, to do all they can to help, by providing transport and accommodation for the survey party, and by giving free access to all books and documents required. In view of the fact that Government are now carrying out this random sample survey, we have decided to postpone our own investigation, at any rate for the time being.

In common with other Branch and District Associations, you recently sent us your proposals for an increase in the remuneration for Indian Clerical and Medical Staff, and I know that you are all anxious for an early decision in the matter. We in Calcutta have also considered this of the greatest urgency, and I am glad to be able to tell you that you will be receiving our recommendations in the course of a day or two. My Committee and I have for some time regarded a larger measure of standardization in Indian Staff salaries, throughout the whole of North East India, as highly desirable, and we were gratified to find that the recommendations made by the various Branch and District Associations were sufficiently similar, when reduced in terms of a basic salary and 25% dearness allowance, to warrant the adoption of uniform scales in nearly all districts.

There are two other matters affecting our relations with workers on which you may perhaps wish me to say a few words. These are the two Bills which, as you will have seen in the papers, are at present before the Central Legislative Assembly. The first is the Trade Union Bill, which seeks to make recognition of unions by employers compulsory. In the present stage of development of trade unionism in this country, particularly in the case of an illiterate labour force like that on tea gardens, the Association strongly opposed the measure. I understand, however, that the Bill is likely to be passed and, when it is in force, a union will have the right to apply for recognition to an industrial court. If recognition is granted by the court, employers will

have to deal with the union. Normally a prescribed percentage of the labour force must be members of the union before recognition will be granted, but provision is made for the industrial court to depart from this principle, if it thinks fit to do so. The second Bill, which particularly concerns us, is the Industrial Disputes Bill. This seeks to make conciliation compulsory, and lays down the necessary machinery for the purpose. Under it, a Provincial Government may refer a dispute to the award of a tribunal, consisting of persons with the qualifications of a High Court judge, and the award of such a tribunal will be binding. The Provincial Government may also make Works Committees obligatory, on which employers and labour would both be represented. The I. T. A. expressed the view that the conciliation machinery proposed in this Bill was too complex for application in the case of labour on tea estates and I understand that the Government of India are considering the possibility of taking plantation out of the Bill, and dealing with them in a separate plantation code, in which the conciliation machinery would be greatly simplified. It is greatly to be hoped that this will be done.

The past year has seen a great many changes in the personnel of the I. T. A., and its affiliated Associations, but before I mention some of the changes which have taken place, I should like to make a brief reference to Mr. Cramphorn and to tell you how gratified we all were in Calcutta when, after a delay of $2\frac{1}{2}$ years, during which period he must have suffered considerable mental strain, the case which had been brought against him was finally quashed in the Calcutta High Court. For his able services during a critical period in India's destiny he has been awarded the M. B. E. In August last Mr. Whittaker the Political Secretary, left us after seven years of most valuable work both to the Industry and to the Province. Fortunately, we were able to obtain the services of Mr. Hardman, another experienced member of the Indian Civil Service, to succeed him. As you know, Mr. Hardman took up his duties with us at the beginning of the year, and I am very glad to see him here with us today. In December Mr. Hanniker Heaton, who had been Secretary of the Assam Branch of the Association, resigned after ten years of service, and Mr. J. R. Wilson has been appointed in his place. Mr. Wilson is well known to you all, and I

need only tell you that he has now gone on well-earned home leave, and will take up his new duties when he returns in the middle of the year. In your own Valley, here, it was decided some time ago to appoint a full time Secretary for the Branch, and Mr. D. B. H. Moore was chosen for the job. I have known Mr. Moore well for a great many years, and I think you are very fortunate to have him as your Secretary. I won't say much about him, or you may think that I am biased in his favour. He is known to his many friends in Assam as "the long man" and I can assure you that he is not only long in body, (which is only too evident), but also long in the head, and long sighted in his judgment. You have a good man in Moore.

I am not going to detain you by talking at length upon the future of the industry though there is so much that I could say. The present Tea Control Act is due to expire next year and, while I think it is generally recognised that some modifications in the existing control will be desirable, we in Calcutta are strongly in favour of at least the machinery of control being retained after the 31st March 1948. The Block Purchase Scheme, as you know, was terminated by the Government of India at the end of December, and after the most extensive negotiations in London, Delhi and Calcutta, we are still waiting to know what alternative arrangements will be made for marketing the 1947 crop. It is to be hoped that there will be a return to the pre-war system of holding auctions in London and in Calcutta and we are doing everything in our power to bring this about. One thing at least is certain. Direct shipment of tea to the U. K., in some form or other, will be essential, because the Port of Calcutta, with its present facilities, could not possibly handle anything like the whole of the North India crop.

By the way, you must think it refreshing to hear reference again to crop and to quality, subjects which were once the main theme of any speech delivered in connection with Tea. It is refreshing to me, too, in an address to Tea Planters, despite the maze of major issues that encompass our industry, to be able to refer to these fundamental factors. Due to no fault of your own the past season has been a disappointment to you, so far as crop is concerned. Nevertheless the future of tea is indeed bright, but remember that the outmarkets are growing more

discriminating in their choice. Improve your present standard and never forget, that your friends, when buying tea are anxious to buy tea and not stalk.

Finally before I close, remember that you are producing a product with a world wide, and that you are members of an Industry that is far seeing and progressive, and whose future is therefore bright and expansive. Tea is on a good wicket.

Mr C. B. C. Paine, I. C. S., Deputy Commissioner, Cachar, then addressed the meeting as follows :—

MR. CHAIRMAN & GENTLEMEN,

I would first thank the Branch for inviting me to this meeting and the Chairman for his kind welcome. As you know, I have not been here as long as a month yet. All that I can do is to give a few comments on points arising from the Chairman's speech with regard to cloth, food, and elephant damage.

With regard to cloth, I am doing my best to see that the quota already ordered for issue is in fact issued by the dealers to your representative. I gather that there has been much delay. It is not possible to make any special issue for Fagua, though the importance of supplying tea labour with cloth at that time is fully realised. So far as stock permits the quota for January-March will be issued as soon as possible. The time is now very short. I am aware that the situation is most unsatisfactory for tea garden labour as for all the public, but until stocks improve I can do no more. As to the supply of unsuitable qualities of cloth, it is perhaps well known that in each consignment the proportion of saris and dhotis to other cloth is unsatisfactory. I am told that the proportion in our present stock is 5% saris and 20% dhotis, whereas it should be twice this. It is worth noting that the other qualities of cloth are meant for all classes of the estate employee, and not merely for the clerical staff, if the labour will take them.

With regard to food, we are, I fear, used to hearing that things are 'coming'. However, I am informed on reliable authority that supplies of dal, a vitally important part of the labourers' diet, are on their way.

With regard to elephant damage, its seriousness is well realised by district officers in this and certain other districts. I understand from the Branch Chairman's speech that the Conservator of Forests is convinced of the need for more effective action, and that kheddar shikar is being considered, along with other measures. I shall, in view of your Chairman's remarks, look into the annual proposals submitted to the Commissioner from the district.

Gentlemen, this is the first time that I have had the honour of attending one of your meetings. I trust that I shall stay here long enough to be present next year, when supply conditions, and supply arrangements may have improved.

Mr. K. C. Datta, A. C. S., Asstt. Labour Commissioner, Assam, then addressed the meeting in the following terms :—

CHAIRMAN & GENTLEMEN,

I am grateful to your association for the kind invitation to this meeting. The Labour Commissioner regrets that being preoccupied he could not be present and therefore desired me to represent him. I am glad to meet once again so many of the members. The personal contact I have had with the employers and the labour for the last 4 years has led me to believe in and appreciate the value of such contact. In previous years also I had the honour of addressing you on the results of my investigation into the post-war needs and other matters of interest to the industry. I need not waste your time by reiterating these.

The Labour Department of the Indian Tea Association with Mr. Clark as its head marks a noteworthy advance in the direction of Labour Welfare. By virtue of his long experience of and association with labour on tea plantations he is fully cognisant of their real needs. He

will have his organisation of Labour Welfare Officers as Government also propose to have theirs with the object of ameliorating the condition of labour. With close co-ordination between the two departments, I visualise much could be done to raise the standard of living, education, health etc. of the labour force. The Labour Advisory Committee appointed by the Government of Assam to consider the recommendation of the Rege report has been another remarkable organisation. It is a tripartite body with the Labour Commissioner as member and Secretary. The result of the meetings so far held shows the keenness of the members on the subject of labour welfare and that they are well prepared to shoulder the responsibility imposed on them. This Committee have already discussed important matters *e.g.* Labour Code, Housing, wages, Employment of children etc.

We all welcome and highly appreciate the decision of your association to raise the basic wages of labourers. From my recent inspection of gardens I am satisfied, that your recommendation has been given effect to by the gardens concerned and the increase is a fairly substantial one, representing about 20 to 30 per cent of their average earnings in the previous years. It was equally gratifying to learn from some of the employers that this increase in the wages has had no unfavourable reaction so far. It encouraged the workers to be less inclined to absenteeism and show better out-turn of work. It has been a matter of further gratification for us that a recommendation for further interim relief in the shape of a daily dearness allowance of 2 annas has been accepted by your association at the Labour Conference held at New Delhi early last month. We must, therefore admit that a great headway has been made to improve wage conditions in Assam plantations. Further improvement, if called for, will come as a result of the minimum wages bill when it is passed. In order to provide accurate data for the fixation of minimum wages you will be interested to know that the Government of India has launched a Cost of Living Index Enquiry in about 23 gardens situated in both Valleys. The result of this investigation will be known after about 4 months. The officer in-charge will soon be touring in these parts and I am to request you to give the fullest co-operation and facilities to him and his field staff in the task of gathering the requisite data which will eventually be of the greatest interest to both the employers and the employed.

The next point of importance is the vexed question of supply of both foodstuff and cloth to the labour force. I know how it is taxing the energy and resources of the management and how anxiously they are trying to avert labour unrest on these issues. When Government is unable to ensure adequate supplies to the association it is needless to blame the employers who, we must acknowledge, are ever anxious to keep their labour force above want in these particulars, at a considerable sacrifice. The cloth position has probably assumed a more serious proportion than the food position. I know of gardens where in the course of a year the workers had as scanty a supply as $\frac{1}{4}$ yards per head. As regards food-stuff I have always held the view that if the management is not in a position to supply the foodstuff in the scale they are committed to, they should pay in cash for those commodities that are not in stock, so that workers might purchase the same elsewhere if possible. I hope your Labour Department will reconsider this. In this connection I must express my profound satisfaction at the decision of your association that no account should be taken of the rice grown by the workers and that absenteeism was not to be penalised by a cut in the ration but by cutting out the concession. I am sure all these improvements have been appreciated by the Labour force. The position regarding Dal and M. Oil is awfully grave at the moment. But I may assure you that your Labour Adviser has taken up the question of supply most seriously and the Commissioner of Labour who shares your concern has lent his full support to his efforts. It is indeed deplorable that though the war is over for more than 2 years our war with our existence is daily assuming acuter form.

We know, gentlemen, that many of you are anxious to go ahead with your improved housing scheme, but are handicapped for the want of approved minimum standards to build upon. As you know, this subject came up for the active consideration at the Conference at Delhi. It was agreed that the association was to submit plans for both pucca and semi-pucca quarters for the consideration of the Conference. When minimum standards are prescribed I have no doubt your association will do its utmost to speed up the building of houses which all of you will agree are very badly needed.

The organisation of plantation labour is a problem of the day. The disintegration amongst the labour force due to difference of caste, language, religion and prejudices born of ignorance, poverty and lack of outside association are serious handicaps to the development of labour organisation in the plantation. While it is felt that it would be unwise to deny them the necessary facilities for organising themselves, it would at the same time be inexpedient to allow them to be exploited by persons whose efforts to organise are not motivated exclusively by a desire to improve the condition of labour. In the circumstances, the proper course would be to afford the workers all the help to organise themselves. This could be done through the auspices of the Labour Departments of both Government and Indian Tea Association. If they are properly organised and led, trade unionism that will grow in the plantation will, I believe, be a help rather than a hindrance to the industry. Co-operation between the employers' organisation and that of the workers will promote mutual confidence and goodwill — a capital of no small magnitude on which the industry will thrive.

Before concluding I must again thank you gentlemen, for your kind invitation.

Mr. C. J. Harrison, Chief Scientific Officer, Tocklai Experimental Station, then spoke as follows :—

MR. CHAIRMAN & GENTLEMEN,

I am very pleased to be present at your meeting and to have the opportunity of addressing you. I am sorry that your Advisory Officer Mr. E. J. Winter, is not also present, but he has only just returned from war service and home leave, and is at present engaged at Tocklai in getting acquainted with the problem he has to tackle, before taking up permanent residence in Sylhet.

Last year we issued a questionnaire sheet to all gardens in the Surma Valley.

This was designed to give us your practical opinions on present day cultural methods, and where they required scientific research.

A report on the answers received to this questionnaire is being prepared, but has been delayed for the following reasons :—

1. Response was much greater than had been expected ; 89 gardens out of 172 member gardens in the Valley, representing 79717 acres out of 1,20721 total acreage (excluding Chittagong) i. e. the answers represent 66% of the tea in the Valley.
2. Answers were much fuller, and more detailed than had been anticipated, and sorting out the mass of valuable detail has been a huge task.

The Report is now about half complete, and it is hoped to publish it before the rains. It gives a very valuable cross-section of present practice, together with scientific comments on that practice. It is helping us to formulate our new research programme, by letting us know what are the most pressing problems, and which questions most need answering.

It also gives us very valuable line on which our results need more publicising. Many of the problems brought out in the answers to the questionnaire, have already been the subject of experiments, and we have the information required. This information is included in the Report.

It is hoped that Mr. Winter's laboratory at Shamsheerugger will be in full operation before the rains. In future all correspondence with the Scientific Department should pass through Shamsheerugger. This will avoid delays as many of your questions can be answered without reference to Tocklai. Will you please send two copies of your letters when writing to Mr. Winter, as at the end of each month he has to send to Tocklai copies of all correspondence passing through his office, for information of other Scientific Officers.

Our scientific staff now numbers eight senior officers and we anticipate resuming normal working in the very near future. This

includes starting the annual Lecture Courses at Tocklai next cold weather.

I should like to refer briefly to the Annual Conference which was held last December and which was attended by your delegate Mr. Telfer. The report of this conference will shortly be circulated and will give you a good idea of the lines on which the Scientific Department is working, and the progress made in its various activities. One of the chief objects of this conference is to give you an opportunity through your delegate, of putting your own problems before us so that we can discuss them and if necessary design and carry out experiments to solve these problems.

The most pressing need at the present time is to prevent our production costs from rising to an uneconomic level. This can be accomplished only by concentrating our crop on the smallest possible acreage, and making every acre pay. It will also be necessary in the near future to consider mechanisation of such processes as plucking, pruning and cultivation, and the use of labour saving methods generally in field and factory. We know how to maintain high crops per acre, and now that the need for mechanical and labour saving methods has become apparent, I am sure it will not be long before they are introduced.

Mr. V. A. D. Howard, Joint Agent, I. G. N. & R. S. N. Co. Ltd. then addressed the meeting in the following terms :-

MR. CHAIRMAN & GENTLEMEN,

I thank you for your kind invitation to attend your Annual General Meeting and for the opportunity now given me to address you.

I feel I ought to mention here that the question of pilferage over the Steamer Services is still receiving the urgent attention of all Officers, and that a Meeting was held in Calcutta a week ago, at which the anti-pilferage steps to be taken by us were discussed at high level and certain measures, as recommended, are now in process of being implemented. I do expect that pilferage will thereby be reduced by some considerable extent.

At the request of the Chairman Mr. S. A. Pearson, then moved the following resolution :—

"I beg to move that the accounts of the Branch be passed and that the proceedings of the General Committee for last year be confirmed."

This being seconded by Mr. D. R. Livingstone, was carried unanimously.

The following resolution was then moved by Mr. J. M. McBlair.

"I beg to move that the rate of subscription for 1947 be six annas per acre under tea."

This being seconded by Mr. K. O. Smith was carried unanimously.

With a vote of thanks to the Chair the meeting closed.

D. B. H. MOORE,
Secretary.

C. W. MORLEY,
Chairman.

Indian Tea Association.

Surma Valley Branch.

Rules Governing the Hire of the Motor Ambulance.

1. The Ambulance will on the requisition of the Medical Officer be available for the use of the Indian and European Staff of gardens within the membership of the Surma Valley Branch Indian Tea Association and also for the families and dependants of such staffs.
2. Accommodation in the ambulance is strictly limited to the patient and two attendants.
3. The revised charges for use of the Ambulance now stationed at Silchar would be Rs 100/- per trip "all in" i. e. collecting the patient up to Shillong and return to Silchar, unless the return mileage were less than 200 miles, for delivery of patients to Hospitals nearer than Shillong, when the charge would be -8/- per mile. A charge of Rs. 10/- per night will be made for the second and succeeding of nights out. Under no circumstances, however, may the Ambulance be detained in Shillong for longer than two nights.

Procedure to be adopted to obtain the use of the Ambulance.

1. The use of the Ambulance may be requisitioned only by the Medical Officers of gardens within the membership of the Association, or by the Civil Surgeons of Cachar and Sylhet.
2. Medical Officers requisitioning the use of the Ambulance for a patient, will be required to send Express Reply-paid telegrams to—
"TEA" Silchar.

The telegram should state—

- (a) for whom the Ambulance is required.
 - (b) where the patient is to be met.
 - (c) if the patient is travelling by train the time of the train's arrival at destination and
 - (d) the name of the Medical Officer.
3. Although the present arrangements provide for the services of a competent driver to be available at short notice, Medical Officers are requested whenever possible, to give 12 hours' notice of their instruction.

The Brahmaputra and Surma Valley Local Recruitment Ageement

Memorandum of procedure in cases of Labour Disputes between members of the Indian Tea Association, as recommended by the Assam Branch, Indian Tea Association and the Surma Valley Branch, Indian Tea Association.

- 1. Any Manager who feels himself aggrieved by a case of alleged wilful enticement or recruitment by another Manager, may submit a full report of the case to the Chairman of the District/Circle committee in which he himself resides.
- 2. The Chairman of such Committee shall be empowered to call for an explanation in writing from the alleged offender (second party) if resident in the same district as the complainant (first party) or he shall pass on the complaint to the Chairman of the District/Circle Committee in which the second party resides.
- 3. The Chairman of the District/Circle Committee in which the second party resides on receipt of a complaint shall convene a meeting of his District/Circle Committee, within 7 days to consider the case.

The Chairman and 3 Members shall form a quorum and both parties to the case shall be invited and given every reasonable facility to attend.

4. Should the second party's explanation be considered unsatisfactory by a majority of members present, a brief report of the Proceedings together with all correspondence shall be forwarded to the Branch Secretary who shall send copies to the Chairman of the Branch and the Secretary, Indian Tea Association, Calcutta, for the attention of the Proprietary Interests involved.
5. Should parties to a dispute not be resident in the same Valley that is if one party be resident in the Assam Valley and other party resident in the Surma Valley the complaint shall be addressed direct to the Secretary of the Branch in which the complainant (first party) resides. The Secretary shall on receipt forward same to the Chairman of the District Circle Committee in which the alleged offender (second party) resides, to convene a meeting at which Rules 3 and 4 will apply.
6. If the case of a District Circle Committee Chairman being either the complainant or defendant, the case shall be dealt with by the Vice-Chairman of the District Circle Committee.

Indian Tea Association.

Surma Valley Branch.

RULES

(As from 31st March, 19 '3.)

1. The Branch Association shall be called the "Surma Valley Branch of the Indian Tea Association."
2. The objects of the Branch are generally to watch over and, as far as possible to protect the interests of the Tea Industry of the Surma Valley, also to keep in touch with Government, the Indian Tea Association, Calcutta and other Associations on matters connected with the Indian Tea Industry.
3. The Branch shall consist of Companies, Proprietors or Concerns occupied in the production of tea in the Surma Valley. Companies proprietors or Concerns wishing to join need not necessarily be members of the Indian Tea Association, Calcutta.
 - (a) All members of the Branch shall undertake to abide by the rules of the Branch.
4. The funds of the Branch shall be provided by an annual subscription based upon the area under the tea cultivation. The rate to be fixed by the General Committee subject to confirmation at the Annual General Meeting.
 - (a) It shall be within the power of the General Committee of the Branch to expel any Company Proprietor or Concern from membership of the Branch, if it allows its annual subscription to become more than one year in arrears, or if it consistently fails to comply with the general principles of action in matters concerning the welfare of the employees of member estates, or in matters concerning the interests of the industry in general as decided

upon by the General Committee of the Branch. For the purpose of this Rule, it shall be within the power of any Circle Committee to recommend to the General Committee that any concern should be expelled from membership of the Branch, but such a recommendation must be supported by the votes of at least two-thirds of the members of the Circle Committee present voting at the Circle Committee Meeting at which such recommendation is considered.

- (b) Should a member resign or default and afterwards wish to rejoin the said member shall be obliged to pay a sum equivalent to the value of the subscription that would have accrued to the Branch during the period of non-membership. No such member, however being liable for a sum exceeding the value of two years' subscription.
- 5. (a) The Surma Valley shall be divided into the following twelve Circles :—

Luskimpur, Mann-Doloi, Chargola, North Sylhet, Balisera, Mid-Sylhet, Longai, Hailakandi, Lakhipur, Chutla Bheel, Happy Valley, North Cachar.
- (b) In each of the above-named Circles a Committee to be termed Circle Committee shall be formed.
- (c) Each Proprietor, Company or Concern within the membership of the Branch shall be entitled to one representative either Superintendent or Manager on the Circle Committee within whose area the concern is situated.

For the purpose of this rule a concern is considered to mean a garden having a factory, or a garden the Manager of which deals direct with the Managing Agents or or Board of Directors.

- (d) The members of each Circle Committee shall elect annually by ballot from among their number an Honorary Chairman, Honorary Vice-Chairman and Honorary Secretary. The election shall take place as soon as possible after 1st March but not later than the end of that month. The offices of Honorary Chairman

and Honorary Secretary or Honorary Vice-Chairman and Honorary Secretary may be held by one and the same person.

- (c) Each Circle Committee shall elect annually an Emergency Committee for dealing with matters of urgency. The Committee shall consist of not more than five members including the Chairman of the Circle Committee who shall also be the Chairman of the Emergency Committee.
- (f) Circle Committees shall meet at least once during each quarter preferably a fortnight previous to each of the quarterly General Committee meetings.
- (g) Any member of a Circle Committee unavoidably absent from a meeting may give his proxy to any other member of the same Circle Committee.
- (h) At Circle Committee meeting the attendance of not less than 25% of the members in person shall be required to form a quorum.
- (i) When any matter of interest or importance is brought to the notice of the Honorary Chairman of Circle Committee, he shall instruct the Honorary Secretary to call a meeting, of which 14 days' notice shall ordinarily be given (except in a case of urgency when 7 days shall suffice); a report of the proceedings of such meetings shall be sent to the Branch Secretary. Circle Committee shall take action through the Branch Secretary who shall have the matter in question brought before the Chairman of the Branch for orders.
- (j) Circle Committee may discuss and pass a resolution on, or make suggestion in connection with any subject affecting local planting interest either directly or otherwise. The Circle Committee may thereupon require their representative on the General Committee to bring the matter before that Committee for necessary action.
- (k) Each member of a Circle Committee shall be entitled to one vote for every complete 100 acres of tea which he represents

and on which the annual subscription to the Branch had been paid. The Chairman, in the case of equal voting, shall have a casting vote.

- (i) Circle Committee members shall, when a meeting is impracticable state their views in writing to the Honorary Secretary who in conjunction with his Chairman, shall draw up resolution in accordance with the opinion expressed by the majority and forward same to the Branch Secretary for necessary action or consideration by the General Committee.
6. (a) For the conduct of the business of the Branch, each of the twelve Circle Committees shall elect annually by ballot a representative on the General Committee of the Surma Valley Branch. The election of the General Committee members shall take place as soon as possible after 1st March but not later than the end of that month

The General Committee shall at their first meeting elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman by ballot. The Chairman need not necessarily be a member of the General Committee, but in the case of a member of the General Committee being elected to the Chairmanship his place on the Committee shall be filled by the election of another representative of the Circle Committee concerned.

- (b) In all matters what whatsoever nature that come up before the General Committee, each member shall have one vote only.
- (c) The Chairman in the case of equal voting shall have a casting vote. In the absence of the Chairman, The Vice-Chairman or the Deputy Chairman shall in the case of equal voting have a casting vote in addition to his vote as a member of the General Committee.
- (d) Should a representative on the General Committee be unable to attend any General Committee meeting the Chairman of the Circle Committee concerned shall have the power to appoint the Vice-Chairman or any other members of his Committee to act as the Circle representative.

- (e) The meeting of the General Committee shall take place once during each quarter subject to 21 days' notice, but the Chairman or his deputy shall have the power to call a special meeting of the Committee to consider any matter of urgency or importance and shall give not less than seven days' notice of such meeting.
- (f) The meeting of the General Committee shall ordinarily be held at Silchar except that it shall be optional for the Sylhet members to claim that each alternate meeting be held at some convenient place in Sylhet to be decided upon by them ; but notice of such intention must be given to the Branch Secretary at least one month previous to the date of the meeting which they propose should be held in Sylhet.
- (g) Any member unable to attend a meeting of the General Committee may, in case where there is no time to appoint a deputy as provided for in Rule 6 (d), give his proxy to another member of the General Committee to act for him.
- (h) Any member of the General Committee who is not present in person or by proxy at any three consecutive meetings of that Committee, creates a vacancy, and the Branch Secretary shall request his Circle Committee to nominate another representative.
- (i) In the event of a Chairman of either the General or Circle Committee wishing to resign during the term of his office, he shall call a meeting to appoint a substitute giving, if possible, 21 days' but not less than 7 days' notice of such meeting, and shall continue until such appointment is made.
- (j) Seven members present in person or five in person and two by proxy shall form a quorum at any meeting of the General Committee.
- (k) The General Committee shall appoint and control the Branch Secretary whose office shall be an annual one.
- (l) The General Committee shall appoint annually Emergency

Committees of four members in Sylhet and Cachar. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Branch shall be members of one or other of the Emergency Committees.

7. (a) The Branch Secretary shall ordinarily keep a register of all proceedings, carry on the clerical work of the Branch and shall collect the subscriptions due to the Branch. He shall draw up and submit accounts to the General Committee in each half year as soon as possible, after 1st July and 1st January.

A copy of the accounts shall be sent to all members 21 days before the meeting at which they would come before the General Committee for discussion and sanction; copies of the accounts shall, thereafter be circulated to all members.

- (b) The Branch Secretary shall also circulate to all members a copy of communications issued under the authority of the General Committee, also a copy of the proceedings of all General Committee meetings.
- (c) The Branch Secretary shall furnish the Indian Tea Association Calcutta, with a copy of all communications emanating from, and proceedings of the General Committee.
8. The Branch Secretary on receiving particulars concerning matters of public interest which require the attention of the Branch shall (should the Chairman consider a meeting inexpedient) circulate copies of the particulars to all members of the General Committee who shall furnish the Branch Secretary within a fortnight with their written opinions, so that in conjunction with the Chairman of the Branch, the Secretary may decide by the general opinion what action should be taken.
- (a) All circulars which call for reply and all returns sent to members through the Branch Office or from Circle Chairman shall be answered promptly.
9. Upon receiving a requisition signed by ten ordinary members of the Branch stating the reason therefor, the Branch Secretary shall convene an ordinary General Meeting of the members of

the Branch at Silchar, on giving 21 days' notice of such meeting and stating for what reason and on whose requisition it has been called,

10. The General Committee of the Branch may, at a meeting provided 75% of all members of the Committee are agreeable, add to or delete from, alter or frame any new rule as may be considered necessary.

Panel of Assessors

For the year 1947-48.

NAMES OF CIRCLES.

NAMES OF ASSESSORS.

Happy Valley—	Mr. R. J. H. MacGeagh (Responsible member), & all Managers.
Lakhipur—	Mr. S. A. Pearson (Responsible member), & all Managers.
Hailakandi—	Mr. H. G. Wright (Responsible member), & all Managers.
Chutla Bheel—	Mr. K. O. Smith (Responsible member), & all Managers.
North Cachar—	Mr. D. R. Smith (Responsible member), & all Managers.
Luskerpore—	Messrs. J. M. McB'Laing (Responsible mem- ber), A. D. Mitchell, C. R. Adamson and G. Gordon.
Longai—	Mr. R. M. Vipin (Responsible member), & all Managers.
Chargola—	All Managers with Mr. E. W. Fortheringham as Responsible Member.

Balisera—	Messrs. G. C. K. Merry, Sen & F. J. Baillie.
North Sylhet--	Messrs. W. A. N. Craven, Stewart, J. M. Storrie and Rai Sahib Gangadhar Tushni with Mr. H. Patterson as Responsible Member.
Manu-Doloi—	Messrs. E. McGown (Responsible Member), R. Godwin Smith, R. Sen Gupta, & I. B. A McNie.
Mid-Sylhet—	Messrs. E. W. Bishop (Responsible Member), J. C. Lees, A. Dutt, J. B. Moir & J. Sharp.

Payment of Fees to Assessors.

It has now been decided by the Licensing Committee that fees will be paid by them in respect of assessments carried out by District Advisory Officers on the following scale :—

- (a) in cases of inspections with claims for the re-determination of crop basis a fee of Rs. 32/- per 100 planted acres or part thereof *calculated on the total tea area of the garden* will be paid to be divided equally between the inspectors, plus their actual out-of-pocket travelling expenses ;
- (b) in all other cases a fee of Rs. 32/- per 100 planted acres or part thereof *of the tea actually inspected* will be paid to be equally divided between the inspectors plus their actual out-of-pocket travelling expenses.

Hail Insurance Assessment Fees.

The revised scale of Hail Insurance Assessment Fees as laid down in the proceedings of a meeting of the General Committee, Indian Tea Association, Calcutta, held on the 3rd March, 1925, viz :—

Area damaged by Hail.	Rupees.
Up to 200 acres	48 (minimum fee)
Exceed 200 and not over 300 acres	72 "
" 300 " " 400 "	96 "
" 400 " " 500 "	120 "
For each additional 100 acres surveyed	...
beyond 500 "	16 "

**List of Circle Chairmen & Members of the General
Committee Elected for the year 1947-48.**

Chairman :— C. W. Morley Esq.,

Koomber T. E., Kumbhir P. O.

Vice-Chairman :— J. M. McBlair Esq.,

Chandpur T. E., Chandpur Bagan P. O.,
Sylhet.

Names of Circles.	Names of Chairmen & G. C. Representatives.	Address.
Chutla Bheel	K. O. Smith, Esq.	Monierkhal T. E. & P. O. Cachar.
Hailakandi	H. G. Wright Esq.	Lallacherra T. E., Vernerpur P. O. Cachar.
Happy Valley	R. J. H. MacGeagh, Esq.	Urrunabund T. E., Udarband P. O. Cachar.
Lakhipur	S. A. Pearson, Esq.	Dewan T. E. & P. O.
North Cachar	D. R. Smith, Esq.	Bierampore T. E., Chandra- nathpur P. O. Cachar.

Chargola	E.W. Fotheringham, Esq.	Singlacherra T.E. Dullacherra P. O., Sylhet.
Longai	R. M. Vipani, Esq.	Sephinjuri Bheel T. E., Medley P. O., Sylhet.
Mid-Sylhet	E.W. Bishop, Esq.	Lungla T. E., Langla P. O., Sylhet.
Manu-Doloi	E. McGown, Esq.	Doloi T. E., Patrakhola P. O. Sylhet.
Balisera	J. Purves, Esq.	Rasidpore T. E. Rasidpur P. O., Sylhet.
Luskerpore	J. M. McBlair, Esq.	Chandpore T. E. Chandpurbagan P. O. Sylhet.
North Sylhet	H. Patterson, Esq.	Malnicherra T. E., Sylhet P. O., Sylhet.
	D. B. H. Moore Esq.	(Secretary).

**Representatives of the Surma Valley Branch
during 1947 on :—**

Assam Legislative Council :

Dr. C. G. Terrell, O. B. E.

Assam Legislative Assembly :

Mr. C. W. Morley.

Mr. J. S. R. Telfer.

Mr. H. Patterson.

Committee of Management, Lady Minto Nursing Association :

Mr. C. W. Morley, M. L. A.

Chairman, S. V. B., I. T. A.

Indian Tea Market Expansion Board -

Mr. H. Patterson, M. L. A.

Mr. J. S. R. Telfer, M. L. A.

Indian Tea Licensing Committee :

Mr. W. Wallace, Calcutta.

Pengal & Assam Railway Local Advisory Committee :

Mr. D. B. H. Moore,

Secretary, S. V. B., I. T. A.

Working Committee of the Mari-Shikhasram :

Mr. J. S. R. Telfer, M. L. A.

Tea District Labour Association :

Mr. G. C. K. Merry.

Mr. S. A. Pearson.

Circle Emergency Committees.

Hailakandi

Mr. H. G. Wright (Chairman),
„ A. Grieve (Vice-Chairman),
„ J. Murray,
„ N. Mackenzie,
„ S. Hague
„ A. Chalmers

Chutla Bheel

Mr. K. O. Smith (Chairman),
„ G. W. Boyack,
„ J. Armour,
„ Gupta,
„ McIntosh Smith.

Lakhipur

Mr. S. A. Pearson (Chairman),
„ H. W. Anderson,
„ T. M. Arthur,
„ H. T. Dominy.

Happy Valley

Mr. R. J. H. MacGeagh (Chairman),
„ J. Stevenson,
„ C. W. Morley,
„ J. Dudgeon,
„ J. Bowhill.

North Cachar

Mr. D. R. Smith (Chairman),
„ I. D. P. Stephens,
„ J. S. R. Telfer,
„ Jas. Watson,
„ H. N. Chakravarty,
„ Rai Sahib N. K. Das.

Indian Tea Association.

Surma Valley Branch.

Statement of the Account for Year ending 31st December, 1946.

RECEIPT.		Rs.	As.	P.	EXPENDITURE.		Rs.	As.	P.
To	Balance brought forward from December, 1945 :				By	Secretary's salary & allowance ...	13,080	10	6
3%	Defence loan with Imp.				"	T. A. to G. C. Members ...	9,629	13	0
	Bk. of Ind. Cal. 4,900- 0-0				"	Circle Chairmen's Office exp ...	1,695	7	0
	Current account with				"	Postage & Telegram ...	2,380	4	0
	Imp. Bk. of Ind. Cal. 11,681- 0-4				"	Printing & Stationery ...	2,763	0	0
	Cash in hand ... 1,566-0-0				"	Office staff salary & allowances ...	8,528	10	0
		18,147	0	4	"	T. A. to Office staff ...	556	15	0
To	Membership subscription a/c 1945 :				"	Ambulance ...	1,824	0	6
	Sylhet— 20,951- 0-0				"	Advance ...	187	4	0
	Cachar— 12,989-10-0	33,040	10	0	"	Pleader's Retainer ...	120	0	0
					"	Telephone & electric charges ...	765	5	0
To	Hire of Ambulance ...	468	0	0	"	Subscriptions to I. R. T. D. A. & Chittagong Chamber of Commerce	200	0	0
To	Levy on Foodstuffs ...	6,184	9	3	"	Books and Periodicals ...	133	0	3
To	Interest on Bank deposit ...	111	4	3	"	Rent & Taxes ...	500	0	0
					"	Provident fund contribution ...	276	0	0
					"	Bank charges ...	8	9	0
					"	Miscellaneous expenses ...	424	0	3
					By	Balance—	43,073	14	6
						3% Defence loan with Imp. Bk. Cal. Rs. 4,900- 0-0			
						Current a/c with Imp.			

31st Dec '46
Bank Interest received
upto 31st Dec '46

15,62,496	9	9	(4) Mr. S. M. Deb	48,129	6	0	0	6,26,477	11	9
128	2	6	(5) " P. B. Roy	6,000	0	0	0			
			Paid to Govt. Treasury a/c :-							
			(a) Balisera Supply	88,418	12	0	0			
			(b) Local Govt. Supply	8,594	4	0	0			
			(c) Imprest Govt. Deposit	70,000	0	0	0			
			(d) Local Govt. Supply	975	0	0	0	1,67,988	0	0
			Amount refunded to Gardens					60,564	11	6
			Branch expenses					1,953	15	6
								8,56,984	6	9
			Balance as per Cash Book					7,05,640	5	6
			GRAND TOTAL ...					15,62,624	12	3
TOTAL ...	15,62,624	12	3							

D. B. D. MOORE

Luskpore

- Mr. J. M. McBlain (Chairman),
„ C. R. Adamson,
„ G. Gordon,
„ G. Clayphan,
„ A. D. Mitchell,
„ N. F. Bacon,
„ R. Panting.

Balisera

- Mr. W. Murray,
„ G. C. K. Merry,
„ J. Howgego.

Manu-Doloi

- Mr. E. G. McGown (Chairman),
„ R. G. Smith,
„ R. Sen Gupta,
„ I. A. B. McNie.

Mid-Sylhet

- Mr. E. W. Bishop (Chairman),
„ J. C. Lees,
„ A. Dutt,
„ J. Sharp,
„ J. W. L. Heathcote.

Chargola

- Mr. E. W. Fotheringham (Chairman),
„ R. B. Thom,
and All Members of the Circle Committee.

Longai

All Members of the Circle Committee.

North-Sylhet

All Members of the Circle Committee.

A Report on the Grain Purchase by the Branch and supply through Government during 1946.

The Grain Purchase Scheme framed by the Branch with the approval of the Government worked on the following lines :—

The 12 I. T. A. Circles were divided into "Surplus" and "Deficit" areas.

The "Surplus" Circles were :—

1. Hailakandi
2. Chutla Bheel
3. North Cachar
4. Lakhimpur
5. Happy Valley
6. Mid-Sylhet

The "Deficit" Circles were :—

1. Lnskerpore
2. Balisera
3. Monu-Doloi
4. Chargola
5. North Sylhet
6. Longai.

Surplus Circles had to meet their full requirements by local purchase from (1) producers (under their food grain licences (2) Licencees (by virtue of the exemption conferred by a Govt. notification).

Deficit Circles were allowed to buy from producers but **Not** from Licencees within their areas.

Purchases from producers in deficit areas were naturally very scanty and the balance requirements of these Circles were met by the S. V. B. I. T. A. by virtue of an exemption granted to the I. T. A. for purchase from licencees in the Surplus areas.

The Branch office continued supplies to the end of June when a serious flood occurred in Cachar resulting in dislocation of communications and consequent stoppage of all supplies.

The flood affected the district so seriously that Government had to declare Cachar a deficit area and the exemption granted to the Branch to purchase for supply to the deficit Circles was withdrawn. Government took upon themselves the responsibility of supplying grain to the Tea Industry from the Assam Valley. The only authority given to the Branch was for making small purchases on urgent demands, and that after obtaining the permission of the Director of Supply (Procurement), Shillong.

A statement of Branch Supply to end of December 1946 to the various Circles is set out below :—

CIRCLE.	MDS.
Monu-Doloi	11,310
Longai	2,720
Luskerpore	24,133
Balisera	15,581
Chargola	2,740
Chutla Bheel	1,240
North Cachar	6,540
North Sylhet	3,950
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>68,214</u>

Upto December 31st 1946, Government supplied a total of 135,974 mds of grain to the Branch, all from the Assam Valley. Quality generally was good but deliveries were very erratic.

A statement of account for the year ending 31st December 1946 is appended here with.

**Circles of the Surma Valley Branch, Indian Tea Association with
Names of Companies & Gardens in the Membership with
their Acreage & Agency Houses, for the year 1947.**

Names of Companies or Concerns.	Acreage	Agency Houses.
Luskerpore		
Noyapara Tea Co. Ltd.	839	M/s. James Finlay & Co. Ltd.
Amo Tea Co. Ltd.		
Amo	881	" Duncan Brothers & Co. Ltd.
Naiua	674	
Teliapara Tea Co. Ltd.		
Teliapara	758	" Octavius Steel & Co. Ltd.
Satchurie	397	
Chundeecherra Tea Co. Ltd.	532	" Shaw Wallace & Co.
Luskerpore Tea Co. Ltd.	823	" Barry &
Chandpore Tea Co. Ltd.	1425	
Imperial Tea Co. Ltd.		
Surma	1119	" McLeod & Co.
Rutema Tea Co. Ltd.		
Rema	655	" Planters Stores & Agency Co.
Deundi Tea Co. Ltd.		
Deundi	1351	
Lalchand	816.50	Private.
Harihar T. E.	125	
Balisera	10405.50	
Consolidated Tea & Land Co. Ltd.		
Deanston	2402.75	M/s. James Finlay & Co. Ltd.
Rajghat	2373.50	
Balisera	2162.25	
Amrail	1974	
Jagcherra	782.50	
Baraora (Sylhet) Tea Co. Ltd.		
Baraora	1465.75	" Planters Stores & Agency Co.
Rasulpore	1732.50	
Duragaon	1215.50	
Mazdehee Tea Co. Ltd.	600	" Andrew Yule & Co. Ltd.
Assam Consolidated Tea Estates Co. Ltd.		
Mirzapore	603	

Names of Companies or Concerns.	Acreage.	Agency Houses.
Looksan Tea Co., Ltd. Sathgao	888	M/s. Octavius Steel & Co, Ltd.
Sreebari T. E.	325	
Premnagar T. E.	147	Private Gardens.
Maulvi T. E.	607	
Parkul T. E.	460	
Manu-Doloi	17738.75	
Doloi Tea Co Ltd.	599	James Finlay & Co, Ltd.
Allynugger Tea Co, Ltd.		
Allynugger	1754	
Chatlapore	1247	
Patrakola Tea Co, Ltd.		„ Duncan Brothers & Co. Ltd.
Kurmah	1020	
Patrakola	1113	
Madabpore	765	
Champarai	943	
Dauracherra Tea Co, Ltd.	525	
Lungla (Sylhet) Tea Co, Ltd.		„ Octavius Steel & Co, Ltd.
Shomshernugger	2800	
Deundi Tea Co, Ltd.		„ Planters Stores & Agency.
Mertinga	425	
Gobindpor: T. E.	555	Private Gardens.
Kashinathpore T. E.	150	
Moheshpore T. E.	262	
Mid-Sylhet	12158	
Consolidated Tea & Lands Co. Ltd		M/s. James Finlay & Co. Ltd.
Sagurnal	667	
Dhamai Tea Co, Ltd.		
Dhamai	1012.50	
Kapnapahar	618	
Sonarupa	762	

Names of Companies or Concerns.	Acreage.	Agency Houses.
Clevedon Tea Co.	506	M/s. Duncan Brothers & Co, Ltd,
Kaliti Tea Co.	412	
Lungla (Sylhet) Tea Co.		" Octavius Steel & Co, Ltd.
Etah	650	
Karimpore	775	
Lungla	703	
Surma Valley Tea Co, Ltd.		" Shaw Wallace & Co.
Silloah	836	
Rajkie	645	
New Samanbagh Tea Co.		
Samanbagh	988	
Rajnagar Tea Co.	648	
Ruthema Tea Co, Ltd.		" McLeod & Co.
Ruthna	564	
Assam Consolidated Tea Estates Ltd.		" Andrew Yule & Co.
Ghazipore	588	
New Sylhet Tea Co, Ltd		" Williamson Magor & Co, Ltd.
Phooltullah	1191	
Hingajea T. E.	694 25	" Private Gardens.
Parhutpore T. E.	506	
Holicherra T. E.	285	
Serajnagar T. E.	280 50	
Rungicherra T. E.	423	
Barkandi T. E.	213	
Bijoya T. E.	305	
Chhotalekha T. E.	184 50	
Luayumi T. E.	366	
Ootterbbag & Indanugger T. Es.	974 50	
Chandbagh T. E.	150	
Lakshmipur T. E.	29	
Muraicherra T. E.	325 75	
Phulhari Langla T. E.	185	
Duckingool & Lackicherra T. Es.	214	

Names of Companies or Concerns.	Acreage.	Agency Houses
Kumarshail T. E.	174	Private Gardens.
Pallathal T. E.	255	
Ameenabad T. E.	150	
Googaleecherra T. E.	305	
	17765 00	
Chargola		
Consolidated Tea & Lands Co, Ltd.		M/s James Finlay & Co Ltd.
Goombira	1265	
Chargola Tea Association Ltd.		
Singlacherra	939 75	
Maguracherra	599 50	" Duncan Brothers & Co, Ltd.
Chargola	1412	
East India & Ceylon Tea Co, Ltd.		
Dullabcherra	1089.	
Mookancherra	750.	" Martin & Co, Ltd.
Bidyanagar T. E.	846.	
Kalinagar T. E.	561	Private Gardens.
Mustafa T. E.	153.	
Chargola Valley T. E.	93.	
	7701 25	
Longai		
Hattikhira Tea Co, Ltd.	2153.75	M/s, Octavius Steel & Co. Ltd.
Isa Bheel Tea Co, Ltd.	1000	
Longai Valley Tea Co, Ltd.		
Longai	850 25	
Chandkhira	941 25	" Balmer Lawrie & Co
Pathini Tea Co, Ltd		
Pathini	1379 25	
Piplagool	591.25	
Sephinjuri Bheel Tea Co, Ltd.	2159.50	Private Gardens.
Bhubrighat T. E.	651	
Eraligool & Binodini T. Es.	702.50	
Baitakhal T. E.	465	
Promodenagar	300	

Names of Companies or Concerns.	Acreage.	Agency Houses.
Krishnagobinda Harishchandra T. E.	85	Private Gardens.
Aylabari T. E.	310	
Dilkusha T. E.	281 50	
	11870.25	
North Sylhet		
Amalgamated Tea Estates		M/s James Finlay & Co. Ltd.
Morapore T. E.	334	
Consolidated Tea & Lands Co. Ltd.		
Lulleecherra	1522	
Jafflong	747	M/s. Barry & Co.
Sylhet Tea Co. Ltd.		
Malnicherra	687	
Lackatoorah Tea Co. Ltd.	1189 50	
Lallakhal T. E.	295	Private Gardens.
Sreepore T. E.	143	
Chiknagool T. E.	120	
	5037.50	
Hailakandi		
Manipore Tea Co. Ltd.	519	„ Gillanders Arbuthnot & Co.
Kunchunpore Tea Co. Ltd.	600	
Kukicherra Tea Co. Ltd.		„ Duncan Brothers & Co. Ltd.
Dholai	1479	
Koyah Tea Co. Ltd.	772	„ Macneill & Co.
Roopacherra Tea Co. Ltd.	618	
Bengal United Tea Co. Ltd.		„ Begg Dunlop & Co.
Aenakhall	1353	
Singalla	766	„ Jardine Henderson & Co. Ltd.
Lallamookh	865	
Lallacherra	630	
Central Cachar Tea Co. Ltd.		
Burnie Braes	739	
Serispore	657	
Chandypore Tea Co. Ltd.	786	

Names of Companies or Concerns.	Acreage.	Agency Houses
South Cachar T. E.	377	Private Gardens.
Sontholia T. E.	485	
Cutlacherra T. E.	234	
Appin T. E.	300	
Vernerpore T. E.	485.25	
	11705.25	
Lakhipur		
Tarrapore Tea Co. Ltd.		" Macneill & Co,
Labac	1029	
Dewan	2367	
Burtoll	1729	
Parak Tea Co. Ltd.		" Macneill & Co,
Dilkoosh	449	
Scottpore Tea Co. Ltd.		" Macneill & Co,
Pallorbund	1228	
Tilkah Tea Co.	1047.75	M/s. Octavius Steel & Co. Ltd.
Eastern Cachar Tea Co. Ltd.		
Binnakandi	920.25	
Chingoor & Bare Tea Estate, Ltd.		Private Gardens.
Chingoor	709.75	
Jhirighat Native Tea Co. Ltd.	447.75	
	9927.50	
Happy Valley		
Rangamatti Tea Co. Ltd.		" Duncan Brothers & Co. Ltd.
Chandighat	688	
Pathemara Tea Co. Ltd.		" Octavius Steel & Co. Ltd.
Thaligram	493.50	
Endorgram Tea Co. Ltd.		
Coombergram	641.50	

Names of Companies or Concerns.	Acreage.	Agency Houses.
Majagram Tea Co Ltd.		
Majagram	468	} M/s. Macneill & Co.
Doyapore Tea Co. Ltd.	463	
Cossipore Tea Co. Ltd.	644	
Jetinga Valley Tea Co. Ltd.		
Koomber	1140	} „ Begg Dunlop & Co.
Larsingah	614.50	
Cheerie Valley Tea Co Ltd.		
Martycherra T. E.	465	} „ Barry & Co.
Dooloogram Tea Co Ltd,	438	„ McLeod & Co.
Arcuttipore Tea Co. Ltd.	861	„ Gillanders Arbuthnot & Co.
Urrunabund T. E.	572.75	} Private Gardens.
Pathecherra T. E.	633	
	8122.25	
North Cachar		
Patrakhola Tea Co.		
Rampore	798	} „ Duncan Brothers & Co, Ltd,
North Western Cachar Tea Co.		
Kurkorie	936	
Bicrampore	889	
Doloo Tea Co.	1594	
Doodputlee Tea Co.		
Hatticherra	973	} „ Macneill & Co
Majagram Tea Co.		
Subong	774	
Kalline Tea Co.	909	
Western Cachar Tea Co, Ltd.		
Jellalpore	793	
Craigpark Tea Co, Ltd.	409	„ Barry & Co.
Kallinugger & Khoreel Tea Co.		} „ Jardine Skinner & Co. Ltd.
Khoreel	567	

Names of Companies or Concerns.	Acreage.	Agency Houses.
Loobah Tea Co. Ltd.		
Loobacherra	400	} M/s. Octavius Steel & Co. Ltd.
Kallinecherra	710	
Budderpore T. E.	523	} Private Gardens.
Ballacherra T. E.	802	
Amaranagar T. E.	150	
Sreekona T. E.	71.50	
Jatinga Valley Tea Co.	429.50	
	11728.00	
Chutla Bheel		
Anglo-American District Tea & Trading Co. Ltd.		} James Finlay & Co. Ltd.
Boro Jalinga	596.50	
Jalinga Tea Co. Ltd.		} „ Duncan Brothers & Co. Ltd.
West Jalinga	697	
Borokai Tea Co.	618	
Indian Tea Co. of Cachar Ltd.		
Rosekandi	1227	
Rukni Tea Co.	516.50	} „ Octavius Steel & Co. Ltd.
Derby Tea Co. Ltd.	1131	
Bhubandhar Tea Co. Ltd.	769	} „ Macneill & Co.
Bengal United Tea Co. Ltd.		
Ruttonpore	753	} „ Jardine Skinner & Co. Ltd.
Cachar & Dooars Tea Co. Ltd.		
Silcoorie	1255	
Poloi	662	} „ McLeod & Co.
Imperial Tea Co.		
Kuttal	620	} „ Devenport & Co.
Sonai River Tea Co.		
Monierkhal	633	} „ Villiers Ltd.
Chincoorie T. E.	310	
Dwarbund T. E.	428	} Private Gardens.
Noarburd T. E.	324	
Bagh O' Bahar T. E.	405.75	
	10946.75	

**Membership Acreage under various
Circle Committees.**

Names of Circles.	Acreage.
Chutla Bheel	10946.75
Happy Valley	8122.25
North Cachar	11728.00
Hailakandi	11706.25
Lakhipur.	9927.50
Luskerpore	10405.50
Balisera	17738.75
Manu Doloi	12158.00
Mid-Sylhet	17765.00
Chargola	7708.25
Longai	11870.25
North Sylhet	5037.50
	<hr/> 135114.00

